



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014594

Address: 133 18th Avenue E

Applicant: Marc Jenefsky, Bazan Architects

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, March 27, 2013

Board Members Present: Chip Wall (Chair)
Dawn Bushnaq
Dan Foltz, Substitute
Boting Zhang, Substitute

Board Members Absent: Ric Cochrane
Wolf Saar
Lisa Picard

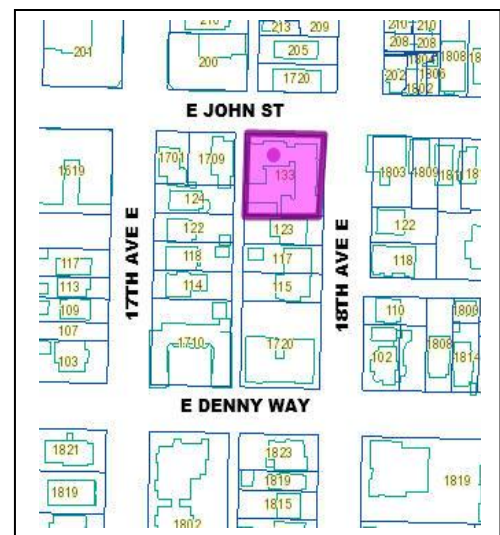
DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise Three (LR3)

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3
(South) LR3
(East) LR3
(West) LR3

Lot Area: 13,823 sf



Current Development:	The subject site is located on the southwest corner of E John Street and 18th Avenue. The site consists of one existing parcel, containing a multifamily structure. The subject lot is located approximately 3-5 feet above E John Street and 5-6 feet above 18th Avenue E. Existing rockeries separate the flat lot from the existing improved rights-of-way.
Access:	Vehicular access is available from an improved 16 foot alley along the west property line, E John Street and 18th Avenue.
Surrounding Development:	The neighborhood is characterized by small single family homes, low- and mid-rise apartment and condominium buildings, most of which date from the early to mid-twentieth century. Older buildings are typically 3-4 story brick structures, while later buildings tend to be wood frame or concrete structures, ranging from 3-5 stories. Recent developments are typically wood frame buildings, 4-6 stories in height. Most of these buildings occupy one or two parcels, creating a fairly consistent scale of development throughout the neighborhood. Many of the existing buildings are set back from the street and from adjacent property lines, while others, particularly larger buildings, are built out to their property lines. Brick is the most common cladding material, particularly in older buildings, while later buildings are clad in a variety of materials including wood, brick, stone and concrete masonry.
ECAs:	None
Neighborhood Character:	The area is well served by transit and is developed with mostly higher density multi-family residential structures.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for a four-story structure containing 50 residential units. Parking for 16 vehicles, and bicycle storage to be provided within the structure below grade. Existing structure to be demolished.

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DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Three alternative design schemes were presented. All of the options include the underground parking access directly from the alley. Each option includes a building massing forming a “U” around a central courtyard.

The first scheme (Option A) showed the preferred option. The four story building is designed with the central courtyard located facing the west alley property line. The building massing is located adjacent to E John Street, 18th Avenue E and the south property line. The primary building entry is located on the 18th Avenue façade near the center of the building. The primary entry is located approximately 6 feet above adjacent sidewalk grade and is accessed by a ramp and stair within the street side setback. The vehicles access is provided from the alley to an underground parking garage accessed from the driveway adjacent to the south property line. The building maintains a varied setback along the south ranging from 15 feet near 18th Avenue to 24 feet at the driveway. Multiple subterranean units are proposed accessed from E John Street by a stair well. Decks are proposed along the south façade and rooftop amenity space is provided on top of the fourth floor. A departure is required for bay windows within each street setback to allow a bay window between 12' and 16' feet wide, rather than the code permitted 8 feet.

The second scheme (Option B) showed a four story building designed with the central courtyard located facing E John Street and the north property line. The building massing is located adjacent to the west, south and east property lines. The primary building entry is located on E John Street and is access directly from street grade. The courtyard is located above adjacent street grade by 5.5 feet. The vehicles access is provided from the alley to an underground parking garage accessed from the driveway adjacent to the south property line. The building maintains a varied setback along the south ranging from 4.5 feet near 18th Avenue to 24 feet at the driveway. Multiple units are located with direct street access to 18th Avenue E. The units are partially below adjacent street grade and will be accessed by a concrete ramp parallel to the sidewalk adjacent to the street wall. Decks are proposed along the south façade and roof amenity space on top of fourth floor.

The third scheme (Option C) showed four story building is designed with the central courtyard located facing 18th Avenue and the east property line. The building massing is located adjacent to the west, south and north property lines. The primary building entry is located within the courtyard access from 18th Avenue. The courtyard is located 6 feet above adjacent street grade and is accessed from a stair and ramp provided from sidewalk parallel to the street and adjacent to the building wall. The vehicles access is provided from the alley to an underground parking garage accessed from the driveway adjacent to the south property line. The building maintains a 25 foot setback to the south property line. Multiple subterranean units will be located with direct street access to E John Street. Decks are proposed along the south façade and roof amenity space on top of fourth floor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were offered at the Early Design Guidance meeting and one comment letter was submitted after the meeting:

- Discouraged use of decks on south facing façade: because decks will adversely impact privacy for the neighbor directly south.

- Felt the building scale and massing is overwhelming for the site.
- Encouraged a more prominent, welcoming primary entry along 18th Avenue.
- Would like to see more housing provided for families rather than just workforce housing.
- Concerned too many small units provided within the proposed building, would like to see a shorter building with larger units and more parking.
- Encouraged architectural concept and material application to reinforce the historic building context and neighborhood charm.
- Felt the deep stair wells accessing units on E John Street did not relate to existing neighborhood context and created larger bulk.
- Encouraged the building window and balconies be designed to provide additional privacy for adjacent residential structures facing the proposed building. Encouraged light and air but minimize direct site lines.
- Concerned the proposed building will not meet zoning code once the Master Use Permit is submitted. Specifically feel that the setback and FAR are not per code standards.
- Preferred courtyard facing the alley.
- Would like to see larger planters rather than a few smaller planters to maximize dense landscaping.
- Noted large planting strip on 18th Avenue without overhead power lines will allow larger street trees within the right-of-way.
- Appreciated outreach to the neighborhood.
- Concerned about solar access to the buildings across the street. Encouraged use of upper level setbacks to provide more light to the adjacent sidewalk.
- Felt the proposed Tudor architectural concept works with smaller 2-story structures but does not translate to the proposed 4-story building. Would prefer a brick structure.
- Concerned about rooftop HVAC equipment and noise impacts to adjacent structures.
- Felt the provided parking is insufficient given the lack of on street parking in the neighborhood. Noted tenants of the existing building would rent parking if available.
- Appreciated the secure bike parking provided within the garage space.
- Felt proposed building design is too modern and does not relate to existing neighborhood character.
- Concerned about light spillage onto adjacent residential buildings.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE:

1. Massing and Building Location.

The Board felt the preferred Massing Option A should move forward to MUP submittal with the following guidance:

- a) The Board agreed Massing Option A provided the better design solution by locating the courtyard facing west allowing additional afternoon sunlight to the space while also minimizing the bulk of structure along the alley and units facing south (A-7, B-1).
 - b) The preferred alternative was revised prior to the Early Design Guidance Meeting to provide 15 foot south side setback between the proposed structure and the south property line. Upper level usable decks were removed and replaced by Juliet balconies. The Board preferred the revision to mitigate impacts on privacy and bulk to the adjacent structure. The revised massing proposal should be maintained as the design progresses (A-5, B-1).
2. **Further Treatment of Setbacks along E John Street.** A number of subterranean units are proposed facing and with direct access to E John Street. Setbacks provided at the perimeter of the site should be developed to provide safe semi-private access.
- c) The Board was concerned about the viability of units below grade. The proposed subterranean entrances along E John Street must be developed with sufficient width to provide viable, safe, defensible space with secure entry points for residents. Entrances must incorporate security measure to ensure personal security and also provide welcoming spaces for users (A-3, A-6, D-7).
 - d) The Board noted that provided stairwells must have lighting at all times of day. During daylight hours the stairwells must be designed to allow natural light. At night the space must include low level lighting to avoid dark hiding spaces (D-7).
 - e) The Board noted the extensive street landscaping present on site and within the existing neighborhood context. The Board encouraged the applicant to utilize the setback space on site and within the right-of-way to provide a dense landscaping area and maintain landscaping “lushness” consistent with the adjacent streetscape (E-1).
 - f) At the next meeting, the Board wished to see additional details for the treatment of the subterranean access and sidewalk experience. The Board requested imagery and drawings from the sidewalk and stair well locations. The Board encouraged the applicant to research successful case studies and examples of similar conditions to inform the design including key architectural and landscaping features that create successful spaces (A-2, A-3, A-6, D-7).
 - g) The Board felt the street setback should include a combination of landscaping, planters, fencing, lighting and pathways that enhance the pedestrian environment. The Board suggested the applicant research use of simplified planters to maximize the landscaping space provided (A-2, A-3, A-6, D-7).

3. Site Analysis and Architectural Context. New buildings for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character of neighboring buildings.

- a) The Board would like to see the preferred massing A option evolve to communicate a clear design parti. The Board noted the design parti should be reflective of existing architectural context (C-1, C-2).
- b) The Board requested a thorough comprehensive site analysis of the existing neighborhood architectural context. The applicant will need to demonstrate the evolution of the architectural concept is responsive and complementary to the existing neighborhood context and material application. The Board suggests utilizing an analysis of existing good case studies in the neighborhood to inform the design progress (C-1, C-2).
- c) The Board noted that the majority of structures within the neighborhood of similar scale demonstrated a simpler architectural concept with durable brick and limited strategic use of ornamentation and architectural detailing. The Board was not convinced the proposed Tudor style, including additional ornamentation and gabled/mansard roof form were harmonious with the existing context. At the next meeting, the applicant will need to reconcile the design choices within the existing neighborhood context (C-1, C-2).
- d) The Board would prefer to use of a few high quality durable materials, rather than many materials (C-4).
- e) The Board would like more information showing how the design parti and material application will reduce the scale of the building (B-1, C-2 C-4).

5) Primary Entry on 18th Avenue. The primary building entry is located on the 18th Avenue façade near the center of the building. The primary entry is located approximately 6 feet above adjacent sidewalk grade and is accessed by a ramp and stair within the street side setback.

- a) The Board requested more detail on how the primary entry will be accessed from the street given the substantial grade change. The preferred massing alternative locates the entry stair is provided parallel to the building façade and sidewalk rather than as a direct approach. The Board requested the applicant review the placement of entry stairs to minimize the grade transition and provide a direct, gracious stair approach to the primary entry (A-3 and A-6)
- b) The Board felt the design of the primary entry on 18th Avenue should be integrated with the overall design parti while encouraging a strong point of entry consistent with existing neighborhood context (A-3, A-1, C-2).
- c) The Board encouraged the use of a landscaping transition between the building and the street property line. The Board noted that larger planters provide opportunities

for denser landscaping, but the project must also limit height of retaining walls to provide a human scale pedestrian experience along the street (D-3, E-1, E-2).

4. **Maximize Privacy.** The development should provide privacy for the adjacent structures.
 - a) The Board requested a privacy study in elevation views documenting existing windows whose privacy will be impacted by proposed development. The location of existing windows should inform the location of proposed windows. Balconies and windows should be positioned to minimize impacts to adjacent residents. Where windows or balconies are directly across or may have privacy impacts on adjacent structures consider locating windows to be high or include architectural treatment such as louvered rails to obstruct directly line of site into adjacent structures (A-5).
- 6) **Develop Material Palette.** The material palette should consist of durable materials that enhance the structure, add variety to the architectural form and knit building into the neighborhood context.
 - a) The Board was supportive of the standard brick material presented within the design package. The Board encouraged use of durable, quality materials respectful of existing materiality context of the established Capitol Hill neighborhood. The Board agreed the building's corner location plays a prominent role in the overall neighborhood context and should be designed and executed with attention to long term quality (A-10, C-4).
 - b) The Board felt the materiality design could progress to become simpler utilizing minimized palette of simple durable materials (C-4)
- 7) **Circulation**
 - a) The Board felt that the bike entry approach from the corner must be resolved so that the bike path interior to the structure is sufficient width at each corner to provided sufficient space for bike movements.

The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

A. Site Planning

- A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics.** The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

- A-2 **Streetscape Compatibility.** The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.
- A-3 **Entrances Visible from the Street.** Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.
- A-5 **Respect for Adjacent Sites.** Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.
- A-6 **Transition Between Residence and Street.** For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.
- A-7 **Residential Open Space.** Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.
- A-8 **Parking and Vehicle Access.** Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

- B-1 **Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility.** Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

- C-1 **Architectural Context.** New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.
- C-2 **Architectural Concept and Consistency.** Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.
- C-3 **Human Scale.** The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.

- C-4 **Exterior Finish Materials.** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

D. Pedestrian Environment

- D-1 **Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.** Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.
- D-3 **Retaining Walls.** Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where higher retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscapes.
- D-7 **Personal Safety and Security.** Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.
- D-8 **Treatment of Alleys.** The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.
- E-3 **Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions.** The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

E. Landscaping

- E-1 **Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites.** Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.
- E-2 **Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.** Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departure was requested:

- 1. Projections into Required Setbacks (SMC 23.45.518 H):** The Code requires bay window projections into required setback to be limited to 2 feet horizontal project, no closer than 5 feet to any lot line and no wider than 10 feet.

The applicant proposes to allow bay windows into the two street setbacks along E John Street and 18th Avenue. The bay windows will project 1 foot and be 16'-6" wide and 12' wide at five locations on the street as shown in the diagrams in the [presentation packet](#).

The Board indicated support toward the requested departure provided the bay projections could be reconciled within the revised architectural concept informed by the existing neighborhood context. The applicant must return at Recommendation with a clear rationale for the on departure request in response to site analysis and architectural concept proposed. The Board felt the requested departure may or may not be appropriate once the site analysis and architectural concept evolve. While the Board was supportive of the departure, they noted a number of items that will need to be resolved at the Recommendation Phase. The applicant will need to develop the architectural parti for the structure. The Board felt the building modulation must be resolved within the design parti and within the existing architecture context. The Board would like the applicant to demonstrate how the proposed application of material will reinforce the parti while also being responsive to existing neighborhood context.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EDG meeting, the Board recommended the project should move forwards to MUP Application in response to the guidance provided at this meeting.